visitation of God towards him. In some cases, indeed, the connexion is manifest to the roan's neighbours, or to the world at large; as when intemperance and excess lead to poverty and disease, and cunning raises up suspicion, and is caught in the net which it laid for others. In other cases, it is visible only to the individual himself, or his most intimate friends. In all cases, it is easier to determine the meaning of the judgments of God in reference to ourselves, than in their reference to others, when they are exposed to them. For being acquainted with all the incidents of our past life, we may trace a connexion between deeds which we have done, and trials sent upon us —a connexion which no other is intended to seek, or so much as to suspect. While affliction can in no case prove the existence of sin not otherwise established, yet it may he the means of leading the person afflicted to inquire whether he may not in his past life have committed some sin, of which this is the punishment or cure. Here, as in many other cases, the rule is to be strict in judging ourselves, but slow in judging others.

SECT, V.—PRACTICAL INFLUENCE OTT THE VARIOUS VIEWS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

An ancient heathen philosopher and historian has drawn an ingenious comparison between atheism and superstition.* With the additional light which we now enjoy, we find it needful to multiply the objects compared, and we may be enabled to form a juster estimate of each.

Some see G-od in none of his works. This is the error of a mind besotted by passion, or stung by an evil conscience, or which has lost itself in the mazes of proud and rash speculation. IT is ATHEISM. If it could be cured by reason, we have abundant evidence to present to it. But atheism is a crime, rather than a mere intellectual error. It is to be cured only by its being so humbled as to be constrained to attend

to the traces of an intelligent mind, which the Creator has imprinted on all his works around us, and of a Governor and Judge imprinted on the heart within.

Again, there are some, and their number is multiplying with advancing science, who cannot but see prevailing order in the

* Plutarch OB Superstition.